

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BAGHDA 01694 240637Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----004513 250054Z /66

R 240525Z SEP 77
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASH DC 5041
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 1694

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, XF IZ US
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BAKR MAKES PUBLIC ATTACK ON USG POLICY
TOWARDS THE GULF

REF: (A) BAGHDAD 1669 (B) BAGHDAD 1370 (NOTAL)
(C) STATE 128375 (D) BAGHDAD 979

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT BAKR'S STATEMENT (REF A) APPEARS
TO ILLUSTRATE GAP BETWEEN OUR EFFORTS TO NORMALIZE
DIPLOMATIC DIALOGUE AND IRAQI PENCHANT FOR HARDLINE
RHETORIC SERVING IDEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS. IT IS
ALSO A REMINDER OF THE POWER OF THE PARTY RADICALS ON
SADDAM HUSSEIN'S LEFT FLANK AND THEIR ABILITY
TO DISRUPT HIS EFFORTS TO MAKE PRAGMATIC ACCOMMODATIONS
WITH IRAQ'S NEIGHBORS AND WITH THE WEST (REF B).

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IF SECRETARY MEETS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER IN NEW YORK,
HE WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO ONCE AGAIN CLARIFY OUR
POLICY. END SUMMARY.

2. A USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCE WITH CLOSE LINKS TO IRAQI
INTELLIGENCE CLAIMS THAT STATEMENT WAS IN RESPONSE TO
UNSPECIFIED NEWS ITEM IN U.S. PRESS DEALING WITH ALLEGED

U.S. CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN THE GULF AREA. SOVIETS, HE SAYS, DREW IRAQI ATTENTION TO NEWS ITEM AND CONVINCED IRAQIS OF ITS SERIOUSNESS. IF IT IS TRUE THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC WOULD ISSUE A STATEMENT BASED ON SUCH SOURCES, IT INDICATES THAT THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT ATTACHES LITTLE WEIGHT TO THE FORMAL ASSURANCES WE HAVE PROVIDED, MOST NOTABLY DURING THE VISIT OF UNDER SECRETARY HABIB. PARTICULARLY ON THE ISSUE OF GULF SECURITY, WHERE OUR ASSURANCES WERE MOST SPECIFIC (REFS C AND D), IT APPEARS THAT THE TOP LEADERSHIP IGNORES THE DIPLOMATIC SIGNALS WHICH WE HAVE BEEN SENDING THROUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

3. THERE IS A CHANCE THAT LATEST STATEMENT IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HARDLINE PUBLIC RHETORIC DIVERTING ATTENTION FROM PRIVATE MOVES TOWARD ACCOMMODATION AND APPEASING REGIME'S RADICAL SUPPORTERS. I WOULD NOT COUNT ON SUCH A FAVORABLE ASSUMPTION, BUT THE SECRETARY WILL HAVE EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO TEST THIS HYPOTHESIS IF HE MEETS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI IN NEW YORK. MEETING WOULD ALSO BE OCCASION TO REITERATE ASSURANCES THAT WE DO NOT HAVE NEFARIOUS DESIGNS ON EITHER IRAQ OR THE GULF.
MACK

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